

2012 Point-in-Time Homeless Count

Training for Survey Volunteers

Overview: Point-in-Time (PIT) Count

- **When?**
Wed., January 25, 2012 – one day only
- **Where?**
Regional, 14 multi-county regions
- **Who is conducting count?**
 - Each region has one designated coordinator who is responsible for coordinating your regional count. Carry the contact information of this person on the day of the count. If questions arise, the coordinator will contact IHCD A if need be.
 - IHCD A is overseeing the count for the state and reporting final results to HUD.

Why do a PIT Count?

1. Provides clear picture of the extent and characteristics of homelessness in your region
2. Understand changes and trends among homeless
3. Comply with reporting requirements from federal government (HUD)
4. Justify requests for additional funding and resources; i.e. Street Outreach/ unsheltered population
5. Opportunity for outreach in your community

HUD Definition of Homeless

****Do NOT use newly passed HEARTH definition! Use def. below:****

- An **unsheltered** homeless person resides in a place not meant for human habitation:
 - ▣ Such as cars, parks, sidewalks, abandoned buildings, streets, parks, bus/train station, camping ground etc.
- A **sheltered** homeless person resides in:
 - ▣ Emergency shelters. Includes temporary emergency weather shelters and domestic violence shelters.
 - ▣ Transitional housing (for homeless persons who originally came from the streets or emergency shelters).
 - ▣ Residential programs for runaway/homeless youth (not foster care or government funded youth programs)
 - ▣ Hotel, motel, or apartment voucher arrangements paid by a public or private agency because the person or family is homeless

Who NOT to count

- ❑ ***Precariously housed***- people on the edge of becoming homeless.
(Ex. doubled up in conventional housing or paying very high % of income towards rent)
- ❑ Formerly homeless persons living ***permanent*** housing units
(such as Section 8 SRO, Shelter Plus Care, SHP permanent housing)
- ❑ **Children or youth**, who because of their own or a parent's homelessness or abandonment now reside ***temporarily*** in hospitals, residential treatment facilities, emergency foster care, or detention facilities
- ❑ Adults in mental health facilities, chemical dependency facilities, or criminal justice facilities

Survey Highlights

- Two surveys – separate one developed for DV shelters
- Read from top down in rows. Note separation at top for Sheltered and Unsheltered
- Have you already been asked these questions today?
- Ethnicity vs. Race
- # of episodes of homelessness (this incidence counts as one)
- Household- only report on children currently staying with homeless parent
- Be sensitive when questioning on special needs category

- **How do I approach a homeless person?**
 - ▣ Introduce yourself and your purpose as you would expect someone coming to your front door
 - ▣ With respect for their space, privacy and time
 - ▣ Comfortable with yourself, non-threatening, self-aware
 - ▣ Without reproach or disgust to smells or appearances
 - ▣ Aware of your safety, nonverbal communication and your surroundings

Volunteers- Day of Count

- ❑ **Unsheltered Count** (counting people who do not use shelters and are typically found on the streets, in abandoned buildings or other places not meant for human habitation)
 - ▣ Service-based locations (food pantries, trustees, etc)
 - ▣ Street/Public places count
- ❑ **Sheltered Count** (people who are residing overnight in emergency shelter or transitional housing; volunteers are needed only for shelters that need to complete paper surveys)
 - ▣ Faith-based shelters that don't use HMIS (state-wide database for data on the homeless)
 - ▣ Domestic Violence shelters

Unsheltered count: *What should I say?*

- Introduce yourself and what you're doing.
“Would it be OK if I asked you just a few questions? It won't take more than 5 minutes. All information provided is confidential.”
- General screening questions:
 1. Last night, did you have some place that you consider to be your home or the place where you live? *If no, proceed to question #2*
 2. Is that a room, an apartment, a house, a shelter or staying with friends or family? *If no, complete survey on the person.*
 3. Ask “Have you already been asked these questions today?” *If no, proceed with survey.*

Unsheltered count: *Things to Note!*

- Collect as much information as possible on the surveys! If you can't get full name, get initials. If you can't get date of birth, get age.
- Surveys should be completed ONLY by volunteer
- Complete one survey PER household
- Distribute incentives and resource list (if available) after survey is completed
- Ask person to identify other locations in your area (for Street count only)
- Stay in assigned area
- Complete entire survey if possible

What to bring for Street count

- Cell phone
- List of phone numbers (regional count leader, other volunteers doing count, survey partner, local police department)
- Clipboard
- Pens
- Plenty of survey forms
- Details on your survey area (or location)
- Comfortable shoes
- Water, snacks
- Donations/Incentives to distribute
- Resource list to distribute
- Flashlight (if applicable)

What if ...

- 1) Refuses to answer certain questions?
- 2) Is clearly homeless, but refuses to participate?
- 3) Goes off topic or is incoherent?
- 4) Asks me for resources I don't have?
- 5) I see a child under 18 with no parent?
- 6) Am threatened, robbed or assaulted?
- 7) Someone is clearly mentally ill or under the influence and they state they have no disabilities?

Safety Precautions – Street Count

- Stay within your comfort level. Listen to your gut instinct, stay in lit areas, don't corner yourself in. Be aware of your surroundings.
- Do not put yourself in danger.
- For street count, all volunteers must go out in pairs of two or more. Try to pair a less experienced person with a more experienced
- Carry important contact information with you (PIT coordinator & police)



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What do I do when I'm finished?

- Once you finish covering area/location you were assigned to, report back to PIT Coordinator
- Return completed surveys to PIT Coordinator by end of the day. **VERY IMPORTANT!** Coordinate this in advance with your Coordinator!

PIT Coordinators:

Some Last Minute Reminders...

- **Send Unsheltered Count list to Kelli by end of week!**
- Inform police departments of count
- Assign volunteers to locations
- Develop a short resource list if possible for region to distribute (shelters, food, medical/mental health services)
- Call/e-mail reminders to all service-based locations and shelters of the upcoming PIT count and what their responsibilities are
- Make yourself (and possibly others) available to support volunteers on day of count. Provide volunteers with more than one number to reach you if possible.
- Make sure that all volunteers are accounted for at end of day and arrangements were made to collect surveys in a timely fashion.
- We will ask you to provide us with a final list of shelters and locations that were surveyed. Organize all surveys by location once they come in and are entered.
- Contact IHADA (Kelli or Brennan) for trouble-shooting when needed.

IHCDA Contact Info.

- Brennan Butler – HMIS Specialist
 - bbutler1@ihcda.in.gov
 - 317-234-7572
- Kerrie Kikendall – HMIS Manager
 - kkikendall@ihcda.in.gov
- Kelli Barker – PIT Coordinator
 - kbarker@ihcda.in.gov
 - 317-233-4611